Albany, N.Y., Dec. 1, 1863.

Dear Mr. Garrison:

135 I greatly wish I could accept your kind invitation to be one of the favored many who will meet in Holy Convocation at Phila. this week: much more might I wish myself worthy to be counted as one of those who, by bearing the burden & heat of the day, have been the instruments of Higher Wisdom in bringing the good Time so near. But as one born out of due time — as one born too late to be a worker in the earlier and more trying days when "not crime itself was so fatal to a man as to be known to hold abolition sentiments" — I do most heartily rejoice that other men have labored with such rich results. As I give thanks to God for all good, so do I thank him for the American Abolitionists, and for their noble work, which has made a true Republic — a Christian Commonwealth — pos-

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sible in America. Of all the warriors which this continent has produced, from Sturdy Miles Standish down to Unconditional Surrender Grant, I should most delight to ~~honor the~~ crown with garlands of honor the brave men and women who have fought through the Thirty Years' War with Slavery.

Though I have never thought it wise or necessary to burn down our political house in order to clear it of vermin — though I have always believed that "Union" would sooner or later be understood to mean "Liberty" — yet I have also rejoiced to recognize that deep conservatism which has ever been at the bottom of all anti-slavery radicalism, and have been captivated by that sublime faith in God, and Truth, and the Brotherhood of all Human Interests, which has not ceased, through all these dreary years, to cry aloud in the ears of this guilty nation, "Let Justice be done, and the heavens <u>won't</u> fall!"

I join with you in thanking God

for the victories of the Past, and also in taking courage for the battles of the Future. For there is much heavy work waiting to be done. In the first place, we must clinch (clinch) the nail already driven, by maintaining the legal validity & securing the practical efficiency of the Great Proclamation. The highest military authority, pressed by an unparalleled national crisis, has done what John Quincy Adams said any general might do; - has declared concerning more than three millions of slaves held by the public enemy that they "are, and henceforward shall be, free." Powerful combinations will be formed to secure the return of the rebel States with no guaranty for the enforcement of this national decree of freedom: the plain English of which is, that for the sake of re-investing traitors with their forfeited rights of citizenship, we will permit the re-enslavement of these loyal millions, in violation of the plighted faith of our

Government. For the sake of a false, treacherous and dishonorable peace, we will make ourselves active accomplices in the blackest crime of history! ~~It is for the anti-Slavery men of~~ It would, scarcely be more monstrous, if we were to send proposal to the rebels,—"If you will resume your old, hypocritical pretence of allegiance & live at peace with us, we will consent to the butchery of all the soldiers now in arms against you, and of all Southern Unionists whose presence offends you, and of all Northern men whose opinions are hostile to Slavery!" It is for anti-slavery men to teach this nation that all acceptable peace-offerings must be laid on the altar of Liberty, and not on the altar of Despotism. And it is for anti-Slavery men to see to it that "the promise of freedom, being made," shall be "kept."

What more effective way of clinching this nail, so well driven into the coffin of our national Tormentor,

than by striking straight, bold, hard blows in favor of "liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof!" If there are honest differences as to methods; if we do not all see clearly the wisdom or constitutionality of Congressional legislation against Slavery in the non-seceding States, except on the basis of co-operation with those States; ~~we must at~~ the least we can do is to insist that Congress must exercise ~~use~~ its conceded power to invite and secure that co-operation. When it is wholly apparent that "Freedom for All" is the settled policy and purpose of that loyal mass which constitutes the nation, and which alone has the right to govern, Slavery in every Border State, as in Missouri, will be seen on its knees, in an agony of vain supplication for a little more time

to make its will, chatter its prayers, gather up its robes & get ready to die as becomes its Christian professions. For we must henceforth reckon among "the powers that be," which "are ordained of God" and which "bear not the sword in vain", a compact, earnest, almost savage party of Emancipationists (not "Abolitionists" — Oh, no indeed!) in every Border State; for even Kentucky must soon come pouting into line, jostled & crowded forward by her more sensible neighbors. While Slavery, hotly pressed by foes who are dead in earnest, can only act on the defensive, and is confronted on its own ground by a free press & free assemblies of the people, the fight may be sharp, but it must be short. It will be glad to die all the sooner for being assured that the loyal sense & sympathy of the whole nation take sides with its assailants; and we must take care that such assurance is amply justified.

May I the say one thing more, which

lies much on my heart? You, of all men, know best how to excuse the many things which try to get themselves spoken when these sacred subjects are on broached.

We must stand by the Freedmen like brothers, through their trying period of transition — through the weary wilderness of years which will still stretch between their Egypt and their Canaan, even after they have clambered out of the bed of this Red Sea. We must nurse their infant liberty till it can go alone & defend itself. The negro, like another man, must indeed work out his own salvation, & fight his own battle; but we are bound to see fair play. The malignant, murderous prejudice and piratical rapacity of the white man must not be allowed to override the weakness, inexperience, ignorance & simplicity of a people just born into the world; nor to force unrighteous inferences from their faults & follies, nor to cheat them of the means of honest living & growing. Equality of rights be=

C. G. Ames.

for the law must not only be recognized in form, but must be secured in fact, as a thing of the spirit and the life, or Emancipation is only a victorious failure.

You asked me to "send a word of cheer" & lo! I fall to talking of more burdens yet to borne & more duties yet to be done. Happily, the lovers of God & man have learned that duty is joy & that hard work is heavenly pleasure. What greater privilege than to meet the rising Occasion, and pour on the strained and sensitive ear-drum of this awakened nation, the clear, wise, warm message of Humanity & Justice? Never was the Lesson more needed: never could it be more welcome: never could it sound so much like the trump of God.

Welcome, day of judgment! Depart ye cursed, who have betrayed and crucified the Christ in the person of ~~the~~ his poor & helpless brothers! ~~Hebe~~ Come forward, ye blessed, who have been true to the rights of the least & the lowest, to the rights of those who could not recompense your fidelity! Inherit the kingdom! It is yours hence forward: & ye shall sit on the right hand of Power.

Yours in the patience of hope and the labor of love,

Charles G. Ames.